

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 439

By Tracy

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of James White Elkins of Bell Buckle.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of James White Elkins of Bell Buckle; and

WHEREAS, James Elkins was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, he served with probity for forty-two years as Bell Buckle's first fire chief, in which position he earned the respect of his peers and his community alike for the exemplary quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, James Elkins was born on January 19, 1925, in Bell Buckle to Robert Lee Elkins and Lucy Pruitt Elkins; and

WHEREAS, a lifelong resident of Bell Buckle, he attended Bell Buckle Elementary School and graduated from Bell Buckle High School in 1943; and

WHEREAS, in October of 1943, Mr. Elkins joined the United States Army and nobly served his country with the 276th Combat Engineers Battalion, fighting in the Battle of the Bulge and helping to push Hitler's army out of Belgium and back to the Rhine River; and

WHEREAS, two years later, on March 17, 1945, James Elkins suffered an injury while repairing the Ludendorff Bridge in Remagen, Germany, which collapsed after repeated attempts by German soldiers to destroy it; and

WHEREAS, for his exemplary service and sacrifice, Mr. Elkins was the honored recipient of a host of prestigious medals and awards, including the Purple Heart, a European Theatre of Operation Ribbon with three battle stars, and the Presidential Unit Citation; and

WHEREAS, warmly welcomed back to Bell Buckle in 1946, he reunited with his high school sweetheart, Dorothy Powell, and the two were joined in holy matrimony on August 29, 1946; and

WHEREAS, James Elkins opened the Elkins Garage in 1948, a business he operated for twenty-five years; and

WHEREAS, possessed by a passion for his career and wholly dedicated to the importance of fire safety, Mr. Elkins served assiduously as Fire Chief from 1950 until his retirement in 1992, winning acclaim from the citizens of Bell Buckle, who were exceedingly grateful for his astute guidance and direction over the Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, James Elkins continued to support the Fire Department after his retirement; for his astute service, he was publicly honored when the new fire hall in the Bell Buckle Fire Department was named in his honor and dedicated to him on October 8, 2006; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Elkins's many professional achievements aside, he was a proud and active member of the Masons and of the Al Menah Shrine Temple; and

WHEREAS, he was also a devout member of the Bell Buckle United Methodist Church, which he served faithfully for many years; and

WHEREAS, James Elkins was deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed the loving companionship of his beloved wife of sixty-two years, Dorothy Powell Elkins, and was the proud father of Robert "Bobby" Elkins; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Elkins leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of James White Elkins, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Elkins.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.